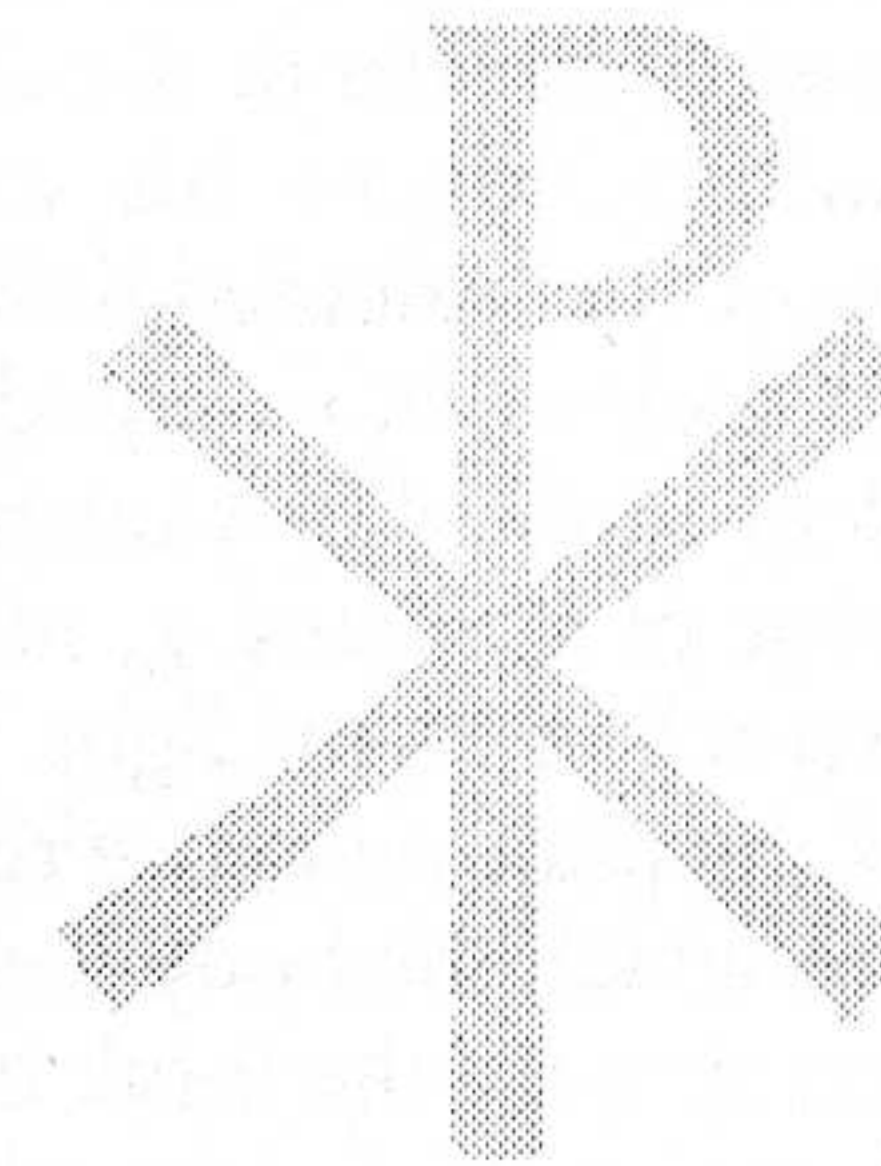


In this light, the crucified man they'd wrapped in the shroud, may not in fact have been the Messiah at all, but rather, possibly one of a few hundred Essenic adherents to the Jubilee calendar ensconced in their retreat atop a precipitous plateau at Qumran surveying the Dead Sea. The prohibition against Judaic observances issued by Antiochus IV Epiphanes (167 BC), included restriction of the 49-year Jubilee calendar – forcing its most devout observors to remove to the wilderness of Qumran to evade persecution. Roman rule under Herod (37 BC) introduced an *unfamiliar* heretical measure, the Julian calendar, complicating matters further – the prevailing 19-year calendar, while also foreign to Judaism, having at least been in use throughout Judaea since its adoption by the Persians (380 BC). The great Jubilee measure alone was sacred to the People of the Covenant, Moses having been enjoined by Yahweh to observe none other but his 49-year Sabbatical calendar. [LEVITICUS XXV: 8–10] But no one committed to Judaic resistance (207–163 BC) knew how it worked; forcing the revolutionaries intent on restoring ancestral sacred practices, to concoct their own version of a 49-year calendar (designed to ensure that feast days not only fall on the same date each year but also on the same day of the week). The crucified man may merely have been one in an endless string of victims of Roman intolerance toward the disruptive observance of this calendar (antipathy which ultimately forced the abandonment of the plateau and sequestration of the scrolls comprising the community's extensive library, in caves dug into adjacent cliffs). But with the emergence of the images on his burial shroud, the man unavoidably came to be equated with the Messiah. Judaism had for some time anticipated a Messiah [DEUTERONOMY IX: 25/6] – these unmistakable signs of sure divinity, leaving little doubt among those confronted by the images, that the man no one had suspected of being the Son of God during his lifetime, was in fact truly that. Christianity, therefore, may not have been the result of an unexampled photograph of the actual Son of God, but rather simply of an observor of an outlawed calendar – the miracle of those images *alone* establishing the basis for belief, not the 'divinity' infusing his likeness. A religion rising purely from a photograph – a recognized phenomenon captured again as recently as 1993 – and the misinterpretation of its origin. Without the images on the shroud there would be no Christianity.

NICK DRUMBOLIS

FLUKE PHOTO



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CONSTANTINE, SON OF EMPEROR OF THE WEST

Constantius I, defeated his rival Maxentius (306–12) son of Maximian, an earlier Emperor of the West, at Milvian Bridge in Rome, 28 October 312 AD. Prior to battle, he had a vision of a flaming cross on high, with the message *in hoc vinces* – “in this sign you will conquer” (in Greek *en touto nika*) – which precipitated his faith in Christ. The thesis, however, that Christianity may have advanced through revelation of the two enigmatic images on the burial shroud (the two ‘cruets’ of blood and sweat taken by Joseph of Arimathæa to Glastonbury, according with the two types of stains visible on the shroud; likewise the ‘blood’ of Christ preserved in the elusive Grail of subsequent legend) accounts for his ‘vision’ as the future emperor’s viewing of the unfolded linen, whose images, crossing front and back when wrapped around the corpse (the *chi-rho* emblem adopted by Constantine, conceivably the ‘hangman’ image of a *crossed*, χ , *man*, ρ), were only explicable as the scorch of divine light. Sunlight, arguably, precipitately *fixed* the photosensitive reaction of the myrrh and aloes in which the body had been temporarily preserved, on removal from the tomb by Mary Magdalene that first Easter morning, in their combination with the uric acid excreted through skin during extensive scourging. Before removal from the sepulchre, to prepare the body for interment, the shroud had harboured no such images – or ‘angels’, as they ‘appear’ in the Gospels of Matthew & John † – their *miraculous* emergence in the sun providing the otherworldly proof with which Christianity so easily supplanted prior beliefs, in those to whom the shroud was shown: rulers, sages and key aristocrats. Christianity, in other words, was purely the result of a natural photograph, characterized as the ‘resurrection’ because the shroud when initially viewed by Mary Magdalene, was blank – its images emerging inexplicably *apart* from the corpse, on exposure to the divine light of god, in hot sun. The resurrection of a man who, although he had not been suspected of it during his lifetime, must – on the strength of those miraculous images – have been the Christ: “It is, moreover, true of the resurrection as of no other individual miracle that on it the New Testament rests the whole structure of faith.” [New Bible Dictionary, p784] An appropriate ‘life’ for the Messiah had to be hastily concocted to atone for not having recognized the ‘son of god’ while he lived; a ‘life’ suitable for a Messiah – thereby drawn from prophecies in the Old Testament – untainted by the ‘disrespect’ shown him in their midst.

Thus the calendrical colleges sheltering the priests of the Chaldæans, Jews, Egyptians and Greeks were shaken – along with their traditions, ultimately, of an ancestral Gnosis – by an unmistakably miraculous proof of inimitable divinity. How else *explain* the presence of a photograph on cloth before the process was recognized?! MATTHEW has Mary Magdalene confronted by “the angel [image] of the Lord [whose] face was like lightning, his robe [shroud] white as snow.” [MATTHEW XXVIII: 3] † JOHN attests to Joseph of Arimathæa’s provisional interment of the body, with the help of Nicodemus who “brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, weighing about a hundred pounds. They took the body of Jesus and wrapped it with the spices in linen cloths...”. [JOHN XIX: 39/40] Subsequently Mary Magdalene arrived at the tomb Sunday morning while “still dark” but on seeing the stone which had blocked the entrance, removed, she hastily retreated to fetch “Simon Peter and the other disciple”. When they returned to the tomb, the other disciple “bent down and saw the linen cloths lying on the ground, but did not go in. Simon Peter who was following now came up, went right into the tomb, saw the linen cloths on the ground, and also the cloth that had been over his head; this was not with the linen cloths but rolled up in a place by itself.” [XX: 4–7] “Meanwhile Mary stayed outside near the tomb, weeping. Then, still weeping she stooped to look inside, and saw two angels [two images] in white, sitting where the body of Jesus had been, one at the head, the other at the feet [the frontal image extending from his feet to his head, the dorsal from head to foot].” [JOHN XX: 12] † LUKE likewise notes that Joseph of Arimathæa “wrapped [the body] in a shroud and put him in a tomb” [LUKE XXIII: 53] and that Mary Magdalene, Mary mother of James and one Joanna found the tomb empty at dawn Easter Sunday: “...the body of the Lord Jesus was not there [not near the shroud when the images emerged]. As they stood there not knowing what to think, two men in brilliant clothes [a brilliant cloth, etched in mystical lightning] suddenly appeared at their side.” [LUKE XXIV: 2/3] † MARK describes Joseph of Arimathæa “wrapp[ing] him in the shroud [he’d bought] and la[ying] him in a tomb”. [MARK XV: 46] At dawn Sunday the two Marys in the company of one Salome, entered the tomb to encounter “a young man in a white robe seated on the right-hand side [the right-hand figure on the shroud laying face-up – ie, seat-down]”. [MARK XVI: 5] †